

## THE RAM AT NEW ORLEANS.

Our Correspondence from the Blockading Fleet.

THE RAMS STEAMER WATER WITCH, of the Southwestern Pass, Missouri River, Oct. 20, 1861. The Late Hattie of New Orleans—The Great Ram Attack and its Failure—Pursuance of Captain Pope, of the Richmond—Details of the Affair—Appearance of the Ram and Fire Rafts, etc.

You are already aware of the fact of the blockade at Pensacola, which has been maintained some months at the passes of the Mississippi river, Mobile and Texas. On our arrival at this station in April last we found Captain Adams, of the Sabine, in command. He, however, was soon afterwards relieved by Captain Merwin, of the Mississippi, also called home, not for his activity or energy while in command. Captain McKen, of the Niagara, is now chief officer of the squadron, and he has certainly exhibited more zeal and activity than his predecessors. Immediately after taking command he ordered the Richmond, Vincennes and Preble up the Mississippi river to the head of the passes. These vessels got off after serious difficulty and were towed to their destination. The Richmond and Vincennes having got aground. Their positions at the head of the passes were such that they could have destroyed any vessel that would attempt to run the gauntlet. Occasionally a rebel steamer, armed with rifle guns, would come down the river, take a survey and then blaze away at us. The Water Witch on these occasions would give chase, but the rebel vessels were always too fast for her. Finding that the rebel guns were superior to ours, heavier cannon was supplied to us from Pensacola. The affair in these waters, which caused so much commotion North and South, on account of the gasconade of the rebel Hattie, took place on the morning of the 12th of October. About seven bells (half past three A. M.) an alarm was given from the Preble that a very suspicious something was floating down the river towards the Richmond. In a few minutes the something struck a coal schooner, attached to the Richmond, parting them. The Preble, which was immediately at the head of the passes, as well as it was possible at the time it was discovered that the strange visitor was an iron-plated steamer, designed as a battering ram. It was evident that the great ram had missed its aim, for she glided away, discharging a rocket as she went. Immediately following the discharge of the rocket several large fire rafts, chained together and filled with combustibles, were sent down the river in the direction of the fleet. Signals were at this time made by the Richmond to slip cables, and the other vessels began the retreat, firing a few random shots as they steamed away. This was the most cowardly part of the affair, as the Richmond, alone could have easily held the passes, destroyed the fire rafts, and then the battering ram. But the Richmond was the first to cut, leaving behind her the schooner Frolic, a prize taken a few days before, so eager was she to make her escape. The Hattie has since been called by the crews of the fleet "the Pope ran battle," after Captain Pope, of the Richmond. In the hurry of flight the Richmond was run aground, the Vincennes getting into the same scrape immediately after. The Preble was saved from a like fate by the coolness and gallantry of Lieutenant Davis, who piloted her safely over the reef. The rebel steamers gave chase and the Preble fired on us while on the run, which was returned by the Richmond, Vincennes and Water Witch. The Vincennes being in a bad position—stern on, and the rebel firing too hot for her—she was abandoned, the officers and crew distributing themselves among the other vessels. Fortunately the Richmond grounded in such a manner as to bring her broadside guns to bear upon the rebels, and thus kept them from capturing or destroying the Vincennes. The Water Witch all the time hovered about, harassing the enemy with her one twelve-pounder rifled howitzer. Had Captain Pope kept his position at the head of the passes, and fought his ship as well as he was forced to do after her retreat was out of his power, this disgraceful affair would not have happened. A few hours later and the Richmond would have been in possession of a forty-two pounder rattle cannon brought by the steamer McClellan from Pensacola. We all felt disgraced to be thus compelled to retreat with our strong force from a few burning hulks, a harmless battering ram and a few armed steam tugs. Rapid firing was kept up for two hours without the slightest damage to either side, when the rebels left and proceeded up the Southwestern Pass. This latter move was in consequence of the appearance of the McClellan on the scene. There must have been a bad lookout kept on the Richmond to have allowed the battering ram to come so close before it was discovered. The rebel plan was well laid, but badly executed; nevertheless it was the coal barge that sank the Richmond. The whole affair will no doubt receive the attention of a naval court of inquiry. The most effective part of the fighting was done by the little Water Witch. Below I give you a sketch of

## NEWS FROM WASHINGTON.

The Skirmish Between the New York Fourteenth and Rebel Cavalry—What the British Minister Says Respecting the Capture of Shiloh and Nelson, etc.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20, 1861. AFFAIRS ALONG THE UNION LINE.

All quiet along the line of the army to-night.

MENTION was made in a previous dispatch of a skirmish yesterday afternoon, two miles and a half southwest of Falls Church, since which time additional particulars have been ascertained. The charge upon our pickets near Brush's house, was made by three hundred or more rebel cavalry, and this occasioned the stampede. There was heavy firing on both sides, our men gallantly standing their ground; but were compelled to retreat to the reserve in consequence only of the superior force and cavalry advantage of the enemy, who, as it was yesterday stated, fell back on the advance of our reinforcements. The charge of the rebel cavalry was made on the pickets of the company H, Fourteenth Brooklyn regiment. The following are the names of the killed.

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## IMPORTANT NEWS FROM MISSOURI.

RECAPTURE OF TWENTY-TWO WAGONS AND TWO HUNDRED OXEN.

KANSAS CITY, Nov. 18, 1861. The party of Colonel Johnson's men, who left here on Saturday for Pleasant Hill, succeeded in recapturing twenty-two of the wagons and two hundred of the oxen belonging to the government, reported to have been burned by the rebels of that place.

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